

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 124512
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO SECDEF

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T STATE 124512

EXDIS ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING REPEAT LONDON 8932 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
NATO BONN MBFR VIENNA DTD 27 MAY

QTE

S E C R E T LONDON 08932

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS SECDEF WASHDC, USNMR SHAPE, USCINCEUR

E. O. 11652: XGDS1

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: GERMAN DATA PROPOSAL

REF: LONDON 8166

1. WE WOULD ADD ANOTHER THOUGHT TO OUR RECENT CABLE
WHICH SUGGESTED THAT THE BRITISH HOPE THAT ONCE THE
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GERMAN DATA PROPOSAL IS FOUND TO BE UNACCEPTABLE TO
THE EAST, IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO PERSUADE THE FRG
TO TABLE NATIONAL TOTALS (REFTEL). HMG BELIEVES
STRONGLY THAT DESIGNATION BY NATIONALITY IS AN
ABSOLUTE MINIMUM THAT THE EAST WILL REQUIRE TO PURSUE
THE DATA DISCUSSION. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, HMG
HAS CONSIDERABLE SKEPTICISM THAT THE SOVIETS ARE

REALLY INTERESTED IN A PRECISE DATA EXCHANGE IN ANY EVENT. SUCH A SPECIFIC DISCUSSION PRESUMABLY WOULD SHED LIGHT ON THE ORIGINS OF THE WARSAW PACT FIGURES. BRITISH DOUBT THAT SOVIETS REALLY WANT THAT LIGHT TO SHINE TOO BRIGHTLY.

2. NONETHELESS, IN UK VIEW IT WOULD BE UNWISE TO LEAVE PUBLIC PRESENTATIONAL FIELD ON DATA ENTIRELY TO THE EAST. IT IS THEREFORE IMPORTANT TO DESIGNATE BY NATIONALITY OR BETTER YET TABLE NATIONAL TOTALS NOT BECAUSE IT WOULD PRODUCE AN ILLUMINATINGLY DETAILED DATA DISCUSSION BUT BECAUSE IT WOULD ALLOW NATO TO REGAIN THE INITIATIVE AND PERSUADE ITS PEOPLES AND PARLIAMENTS THAT THE ALLIANCE HAD DONE ITS SHARE IN PROMOTING MOVEMENT TOWARD AN MBFR AGREEMENT.

3. FOLLOWING FROM THIS, WE WOULD MAKE ONE FINAL POINT. IF THE BRITISH DO HOPE THAT THE GERMANS CAN BE CONVINCED AT SOME POINT THAT NATIONAL TOTALS SHOULD BE TABLED, WE WOULD GUESS THAT THEY WILL LEAVE IT TO THE US TO PERSUADE THE FRG TO TAKE THAT STEP. AS AN FCO OFFICIAL SAID RECENTLY, "IF MBFR WERE ALL THE WORLD, WE WOULD PUSH THE GERMANS. BUT IT IS NOT ALL THE WORLD AND WE NEED THEM AND THEIR MONEY MORE THAN THEY NEED US. IT WOULD BE CRAZY FOR US TO TAKE ON THE GERMANS ON DATA DISAGGREGATION."

4. THAT ABOUT SUMS UP WHAT WE THINK IS THE FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH POSITION ON THIS QUESTION. THEY WOULD BE MOST PLEASED IF, WITHOUT UNDULY STRAINING THE US-FRG
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RELATIONSHIP, WASHINGTON COULD SHOW BONN THE ERROR OF ITS WAYS. BUT THE BRITISH ARE NOT GOING TO EXPEND MUCH CAPITAL ON THE EFFORT. SPIERS UNQTE VANCE

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